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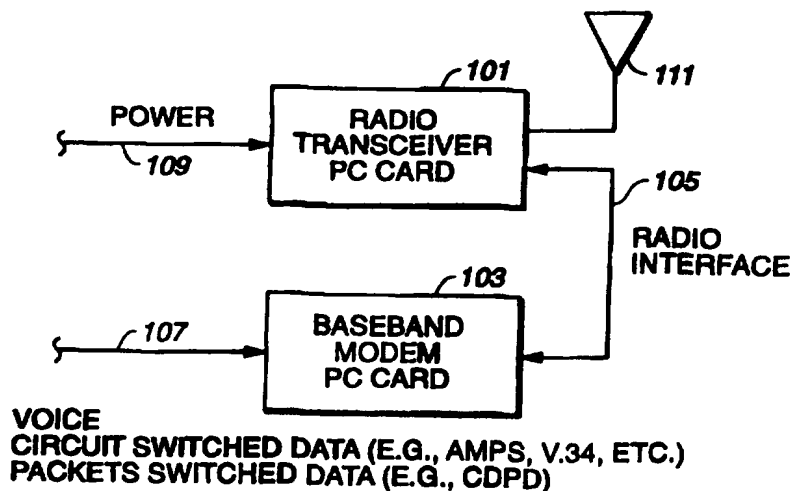
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(57) Abstract

An inexpensive, PCMCIA-based radio transceiver is provided that interfaces to a separate baseband modem, which may itself be PCMCIA-based or may be an internal modem of a notebook computer. Together, the PCMCIA-based radio transceiver and the baseband modem realize a wireless modem. In order to minimize cost and increase versatility of the resulting wireless modem, the radio transceiver is a relatively unintelligent, protocol-agnostic, slave device that is controlled by commands issued by the baseband modem. The baseband modem may be a hardware modem or a software modem. In either case, the character of the baseband modem may be changed by downloading new software. The radio transceiver may also be exchanged for another within a family of radio transceivers, each of which is customized for a particular radio standard. The result is an extremely flexible, extremely low-cost wireless modem solution.

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TWO-PIECE PCMCIA MULTI-MODE WIRELESS MODEM

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to wireless modems, particularly to wireless modems realized at least in part by a PCMCIA card, otherwise known as a PC Card™.

2. State of the Art

Integrated circuit cards, particularly cards conforming to the PCMCIA or PC Card™ standard, have become a mainstay of mobile computing. Devices of various descriptions are available in the PCMCIA format, including memory cards, modems, disk drives, etc. The development of mobile computing has resulting in an increased demand in particular for wireless modems.

PCMCIA cards come in different varieties including, in order of increasing thickness, Type I, Type II and Type III cards. Ideally, a wireless modem would be realized in the form of a PCMCIA card such as a Type II card and would fit entirely within a Type II package enclosure. To date, this goal has not been fully realized. Because of the significant transmit power requirements of a wireless modem, existing PCMCIA-based wireless modems are provided with a rather bulky battery enclosed within an extension to the standard Type II card. During stand-by operation, the battery is trickle charged in preparation for future transmission and its attendant high power requirements. During transmission, the extra power required by the wireless modem is drawn from the battery.

A different approach to realizing a wireless modem has been to leverage the investment in existing equipment by interfacing a separate radio transceiver to an existing PCMCIA baseband modem. In this approach, the radio is not PCMCIA-based, and is protocol-specific. That is, the radio implements a particular radio protocol such as AMPS, for example. The radio transceiver therefore cannot be used with other different radio protocols, such as CDPD, PCS, etc., since for each different standard, the radio transceiver is different.

Although the pace of innovation in telecommunications may well defy the notion of a common RF standard, the lack of a common standard results in higher costs to consumers. As demonstrated in the wired computer modem market, market penetration depends heavily on prices reaching a threshold level of affordability. Continued improvements are therefore needed in order to make radio data communications equipment widely affordable.

What is needed, then, is an improved PCMCIA-based wireless modem that achieves the competing dual objectives of versatility and low cost.

10 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention, generally speaking, provides for an inexpensive, PCMCIA-based radio transceiver that interfaces to a separate baseband modem, which may itself be PCMCIA-based or may be an internal modem of a notebook computer. Together, the PCMCIA-based radio transceiver and the baseband modem realize a wireless modem. In order to minimize cost and increase versatility of the resulting wireless modem, the radio transceiver is a relatively unintelligent, protocol-agnostic, slave device that is controlled by commands issued by the baseband modem. The baseband modem may be a hardware modem or a software modem. In either case, the character of the baseband modem may be changed by downloading new software. The radio transceiver may also be exchanged for another within a family of radio transceivers, each of which customized for a particular radio standard. The result is an extremely flexible, extremely low-cost wireless modem solution.

25 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

The present invention may be further understood from the following description in conjunction with the appended drawing. In the drawing:

Figure 1 is a diagram showing a radio transceiver incorporated within a first system configuration to realize a wireless modem;

Figure 2 is a block diagram showing the radio transceiver of Figure 1 incorporated within a second system configuration to realize a wireless modem;

Figure 3 is a block diagram of the radio transceiver of Figure 1;

Figure 4 is a block diagram of the baseband modem of Figure 1;

5 Figure 5 is a block diagram showing details of the signalling interface between the radio transceiver of Figure 3 and the baseband modem of Figure 4; and

Figures 6-14 are diagrams of registers in an exemplary implementation of the interface of Figure 5.

10

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring to Figure 1, the overall architecture of the present wireless modem in a first embodiment thereof will be described. Both a radio 101 and a baseband modem 103 are realized as PC cards, e.g. PCMCIA cards. The PC
15 cards are connected together through a radio interface 105 described in detail hereinafter.

The baseband modem PC card receives from a host computer (not shown) digital data through a card (e.g., PCMCIA) interface 107. The digital data may be circuit switched data (e.g., AMPS, V.34 or other wireline data,
20 etc.) or packet switched data (e.g., CDPDL). The digital data may also represent an analog voice signal. The baseband modem 103 modulates the digital data and provides the resulting modulated signal to the radio transceiver 101 through the radio interface 105.

The radio transceiver PC card 101 is powered from a card (e.g.,
25 PCMCIA) interface 109. The radio transceiver 101 receives a modulation signal from the baseband modem PC card 103 and uses the signal to modulate an RF carrier. The modulated RF carrier is transmitted via an antenna 111.

In Figure 1, both the radio 101 and the baseband modem 103 are realized as PC cards. Referring now to Figure 2, a similar arrangement is
30 shown. Instead of the baseband modem being realized in the form of a

PCMCIA card, however, the baseband modem 103' is an internal modem of a computer, e.g., a notebook computer 120 or the like. In other aspects, the wireless modems of Figure 1 and Figure 2 are substantially the same.

Referring to Figure 3, the radio transceiver 101 of Figures 1 and 2 is shown in greater detail. Of particular interest is a control portion of the radio transceiver. This portion of the transceiver receives commands from the host computer through the radio interface to control operation of the radio. These commands are relatively low-level commands as described hereinafter.

The control portion of the radio transceiver consists primarily of a microcontroller 301 and a data processor for cellular radio (DPROC) 303 such as the UMA1002 available from Philips Semiconductors. The microcontroller 301, in general, exercises overall control of the radio transceiver and its functions. The DPROC 303, in general, implements functions specific to AMPS. When protocols other than AMPS are used, such as CDPD, the DPROC is idle.

Both the microcontroller and the DPROC are connected to two different buses, a two-wire I²C bus 305 and a four-wire serial bus 307. The microcontroller 301 provides a clock signal to the DPROC and exchanges various control signals with the DPROC on a bus 309. A clock signal for the microcontroller 301 is provided by an oscillator 311.

The microcontroller includes a PROM 313, an A/D converter 315, and a D/A converter (DAC) 317. The PROM 313 receives a programming voltage VPP from the PCMCIA interface or the like. The A/D converter 315 is used to determine the values of various analog signals including the following: a temperature signal produced by a temperature sensor, a Received Signal Strength Indicator (RSSI), and a modulation feedback signal (MOD). The D/A converter 317 is used to produce various tuning and control voltages including the following: a power control voltage PWR used to control the transmit power of the radio, a voltage QTUNE used to adjust the center frequency of the demodulator within a receive section of the radio, and an FTUNE signal used

to fine tune the center frequency within a transmit section of the radio. The signal FTUNE is combined in a summer 319 with the modulation signal RMOD from the baseband modem and a signal "AMPMOD" from the DPROC. The latter signal is attenuated by a trim pot 321 set during factory calibration to give
5 the proper transmit deviation.

Only the principal inputs and outputs of the microcontroller necessary to a full and complete understanding of the present invention have been discussed. Other signals are exchanged between the microcontroller 301 and various other components within the radio as represented by the bus CONTROL I/O 323. In
10 addition, a transmit keying signal TXKEY is input to the microcontroller. The function of this signal is discussed in detail hereinafter.

The radio transceiver of Figure 3 interfaces to a standard modem—either a modem PC Card or an internal modem—in a very similar fashion as a standard cellular phone in "Direct Connect" mode. 'Direct Connect' mode
15 refers to the ability to connect directly from a modem to a cellular phone without the need for an intermediate interface box. Early modems had to connect to an interconnect box which performed whatever signal conditioning the phone required. Subsequently improvements resulted in building the appropriate hardware and software into the modem, facilitating a direct
20 connection to the phone. Some of the functions normally performed within a cellular phone when that phone is being used for a data connection, however, are performed instead within the baseband modem. A specialized interface between the radio transceiver and the baseband modem is therefore required. The interface allows for AMPS data and voice communications and supports as
25 well the CDPD protocol.

A block diagram of one possible modem architecture is shown in Figure 4. A microprocessor control unit is connected to a bus 403 including control, address and data portions. Also connected to the bus 403 are flash memory 405, random-access memory 407, a pocket modem interface circuit 409 and a
30 V.34 interface 411. The microprocessor control unit 401 exercises overall

control of the modem, the pocket modem interface circuit 409 interfaces with the radio 300 via the buses 305 and 307 as previously described, and the V.34 interface 411 interfaces with a Dsp 411 to control modulation and demodulation of data.

5 A clock generator 415 provides a clock signal to the pocket modem interface circuit 409 and the V.34 interface 411. The pocket modem interface circuit 409 is connected to an EEPROM memory 417. The pocket modem interface circuit 409 controls the clock speed of the MCU using a multiplexer 419.

10 In the illustrated embodiment, the modem may be operated in either wireless mode or wired mode. Hence the DSP produces a CODEC-OUT signal that is connected to both the radio 300 and to a DAA (Data Access Arrangement) 421. The DAA 421 is coupled to the telephone interface. A CODEC-IN signal of the DAA 421 is received from either the DAA 421 or the
15 radio 300 through a multiplexer 423.

The V.34 interface 411 includes voice capability. Digitized voice signals are therefore transmitted to and from voice codec 425 across a bus 427. The voice codec 425 is connected to a speaker driver 429 and to a microphone bias circuit 431.

20 The following components have been found to be suitable for use in modem of Figure 4:

Part	Mfgr.	Part No.
Pocket Modem Interface Peripheral	Xilinx	XC3030A-70VQ100C
25 V.34 Interface ASIC	Lucent Tech.	VALV34-TQFP
Microprocessor control unit	Zilog	Z80182-16ASC

The radio transceiver card obtains power (V_{cc} and V_{pp}) from the PCMCIA socket through a standard PCMCIA connector. A simple CIS (Card
30 Information Structure) is included on the radio transceiver card to interface to

Card and Socket Services software on the host computer. The CIS will, for example, enable Vpp at 12V.

A separate interface, to be presently described, is used for audio and control purposes. In accordance with one embodiment, a 12-pin connector is used for communication between the modem and the radio card. A block diagram specifying the signal lines comprising the interface is shown in Figure 5. The function of each signal line is briefly described in the following table:

	SIGNAL	FUNCTION
10	ANALOG MOD (Modulation)	The modulation input to the radio transmitter.
	DISC (Discriminator)	The discriminator output from the radio receiver.
	AGND (Analog Ground)	The ground reference for MOD and DISC.
	CONTROL IICSDA, IICSCL	Two-wire serial interface conforming to I ² C specification.
	KEY_STATUS	Primarily used as a transmit key, TXKEY, signal.
15	DPROC DATA RXLINE	Received AMPS control data.
	RXCLK	Clock for received data.
	TXLINE	Transmit AMPS control data and handshake.
	TXCLK	Clock for transmit data.
	POWER VCC	Power from modem (optional). May be used to power logic circuitry.
	20 DGND	Reference signal for digital signals.

Logically, the modem/radio interface is designed around a set of registers. In a preferred embodiment, these registers are read/written using the

I²C protocol. The register address may be embedded in the I²C address to minimize addressing overhead.

In an exemplary embodiment, there are 16 registers, eight of which are defined and eight of which are reserved for future use. The definition and
5 function of each of the eight registers will be described in turn.

Referring to Figure 6, register 0 is a general control register. The TXON bit turns on power to the radio transmitter stages when set to 1. RXON turns on power to the receiver. RXON must have been previously set before setting TXON.

10 In an exemplary embodiment, the radio is provided with two different keying modes. When the KEYMODE bit is set to 0, the ARM/KEY bit is configured to "arm" the transmitter. In this mode, the keying of the radio is controlled using the TXKEY interface line in Figure 3 allowing for very accurate timing of the keying of the radio, as required for CDPD operation.
15 When the KEYMODE bit is set to 1, the ARM/KEY bit actually keys the transmitter. In this mode, the keying of the radio is fully controlled through the I²C interface.

A Watchdog Timer is used to ensure that the radio does not inadvertently become stuck in an unknown state. Toggling the bit WDOG resets
20 the Watchdog Timer. The Watchdog Timer should be reset at least once a second to avoid a reset of the radio. When the WDGRST bit is set, it indicates that a watchdog Reset has occurred.

Writing a 1 to the SLEEP bit places the radio transceiver into a sleep state. Wakeup is automatic when the radio is addressed on the I²C interface.
25 Writing a 1 to the RST bit returns all registers to their Reset state.

Referring to Figure 7, the ADC/DAC Select register is used to select one of eight channels of the ADC of Figure, and one of eight channels of the DAC of Figure 3. As seen in Figure 3, inputs to the ADC include an RSSI signal, a temperature input, and a MOD loopback path. Outputs from the DAC
30 include the PWR, QTUNE (discriminator tuning) and FTUNE (center

frequency tuning) signals. Actual data for the ADC and the DAC is read from and written to an ADC/DAC Data register, shown in Figure 8.

The controller in Figure 3 is provided with a general-purpose, programmable I/O port. Eight I/O lines are provided for communication/control within the radio. Each of the I/O lines may be configured as an input or an output by setting or resetting the appropriate bits of the IOPORT Direction register of Figure 9.

In an exemplary embodiment, various ones of the I/O lines are assigned functions as indicated in Figure 10, showing the IOPORT Data register, and described in the following table:

	SIGNAL	IN/OUT	TO/FROM	FUNCTION
	RACtrl	IN	FROM DPROC	Receive Audio Mute
	TACtrl	IN	FROM DPROC	Transmit Audio Mute
	TXCtrl	IN	FROM DPROC	Transmitter RF disable (indication of access failure)
15	BUSY	IN	FROM DPROC	Control Channel Busy/Idle
	DPROCST	OUT	TO DEPROC	Reset the DPROC
	LE	OUT	TO Synthesizer	Latch enable for synthesizer programming
	EECS	OUT	TO EEPROM	Chip Select for serial EEPROM

Status of the foregoing signals may be monitored on a status line in accordance with a status mask, shown in Figure 11. The status line is the logical AND of all of the conditions which have their mask bits set.

A Radio Status register is defined as shown in Figure 12. A LOCK bit indicates whether or not the radio synthesizer is locked. A TXKEY bit indicates

whether or not the Transmit Power Amplifier is keyed (turned on) or de-keyed (turned off).

To optimize the speed of serial device access, the serial data interface is implemented as shown in Figures 13 and 14. Referring to Figure 13, a data
5 write operation begins with a Start bit S, followed by a series of address bits, followed by a Write bit W. The receiving device then acknowledges with an Acknowledge bit A. The sending device then sends a series of bits representing the length of the data to follow. The receiving device acknowledges. The
10 sending device then sends a predetermined number of bits and waits for the receiver's acknowledgement. This sequence of events is repeated until the last quantum of bits has been sent and acknowledged. The sender then sends a Stop bit P.

A read operation is illustrated in Figure 14. The first portion of a read operation is identical to that of a write operation, through sending of length and
15 receipt of acknowledgement. The device responding to the read request then sends a Start bit S, followed by a series of address bits (corresponding to the requested starting address), followed by a Read bit R. The requesting device then acknowledges with an Acknowledge bit A. The device responding to the read request then sends a predetermined number of bits and waits for the
20 requestor's acknowledgement. This sequence of events is repeated until the last quantum of bits has been sent and acknowledged. The device responding to the read request then sends a Stop bit P.

The construction of the radio transceiver of Figure 3 makes it inexpensive and hence widely affordable. A family of inexpensive radios may
25 be based on substantially the same platform, each radio using the same baseband modem. Hence a single user might well afford multiple radios corresponding to different wireless services. The radio design does, however, require relatively low-level commands to be issued from the baseband modem to control the radio. The following examples are provided of different command
30 sequences used to perform common operations.

To turn on the radio and have it receive, host software issues the following sequence of commands:

- Configure the IOPORT Data and Direction registers.
- Set RXON high.
- 5 • Wait roughly 100us.
- Read the QTUNE value from storage and write it into the DAC that drives the QTUNE line.
- Program the synthesizer for the channel to be received, using the signals LE, CLK and DAT. The receiver will deliver a valid DISC signal after
- 10 about 20ms.

The synthesizer output is used as the first local oscillator within the received section of the radio transceiver. In the illustrated embodiment, the synthesizer is programmed to operate at the desired receive frequency plus 45.0 MHz. The frequency is reprogrammed for each new channel. More

15 specifically, to load the synthesizer from scratch, two serial bits strings are loaded (a reference divider string and a variable divider string) as follows:

- Set LE bit low.
- Send the serial bit string using CLK and DAT.
- Set LE bit high.
- 20 • Set LE bit low.

With the receiver on and the synthesizer programmed to the correct channel, a transmit procedure may be started as follows:

- Set KEYMODE as appropriate.
- Turn on the transmitter exciter by asserting TXON.
- 25 • Set DPROC_GAIN, FTUNE, TNET and DSP output amplitude values for the desired channel as appropriate based on calibration parameters.
- Set the desired RF PWR value based on calibration parameters.
- Wait 10ms after turning on tXON to allow the exciter to stabilize.
- When ready to transmit, key the radio in accordance with one of the
- 30 following procedures.

- At the end of transmission, de-key the radio.
- Wait 1ms.
- De-assert TXON.

Keying is performed in accordance with either of two distinct
5 mechanisms. The appropriate method is selected using the KEYMODE control
bit. When KEYMODE = 0, keying of the radio is controlled using the
KEY_STATUS interface line, as follows:

- Prekey a short time (e.g., 10ms) before transmission by setting TXON,
selecting KEYMODE = 0, and setting the KEY/ARM bit. The
10 KEY_STATUS line should be pulled low by the modem at this time as the
radio become ready for transmission. The radio awaits a low to high
transition on the KEY_STATUS line to key the power amplifier.
- To key, the radio KEY_STATUS line is raised high when appropriate
according to the medium access procedure. This transition is controlled
15 directly by the modem DSP. At this point, in the case of CDPD, the packet
preamble will be started. This will start the transmission.
- To de-key, the KEY_STATUS line is lowered at the end of the packet, thus
initiating the DEKEY process which involves ramping the power down.
- A short time later the transmitter may be fully de-activated by clearing
20 TXON.

When KEYMODE = 1, keying of the radio is fully controlled through
the I₂C interface as follows:

- Prekey by setting TXON, selecting KEYMODE = 1, with KEY/ARM reset
to 0.
- 25 • Key by setting the KEY/ARM bit, thus enabling the power amplifier. The
controller ensures that the data transmission starts when the power amplifier
is at full power, accounting for the delay through the PC interface.
- De-key by clearing the KEY/ARM bit, thus initiating the ramp-down
procedure.
- 30 • Fully de-activate the transmitter by clearing TXON.

By shifting control functions from the radio to the host computer, the cost of the radio may be significantly reduced. Inexpensive radio modules may be provided, tailored for different uses.

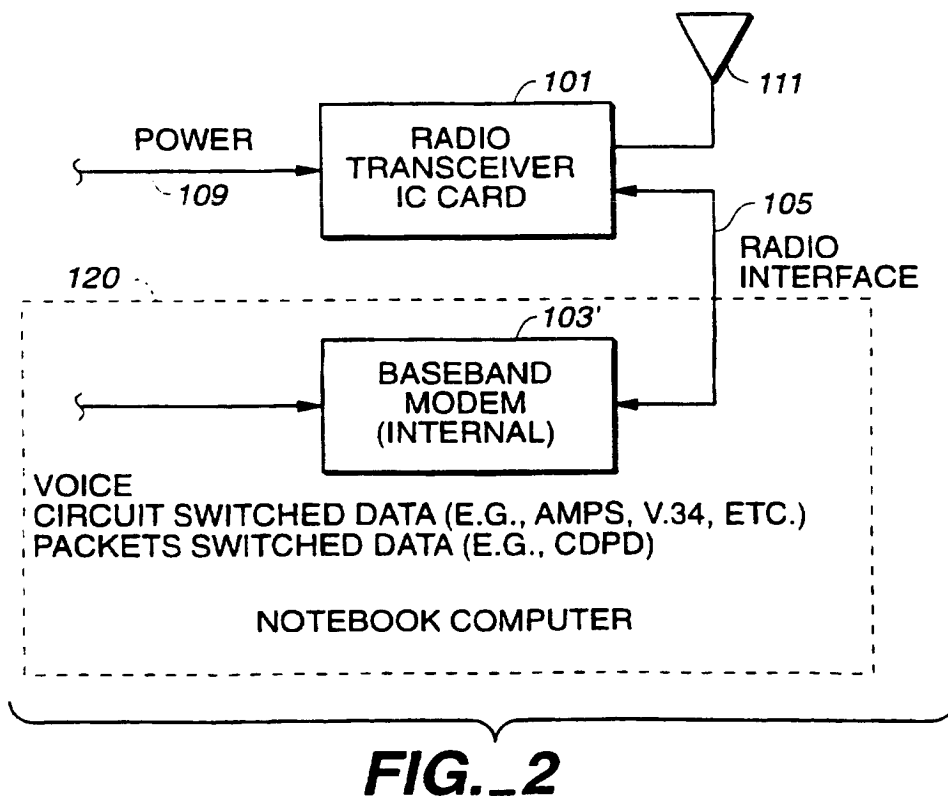
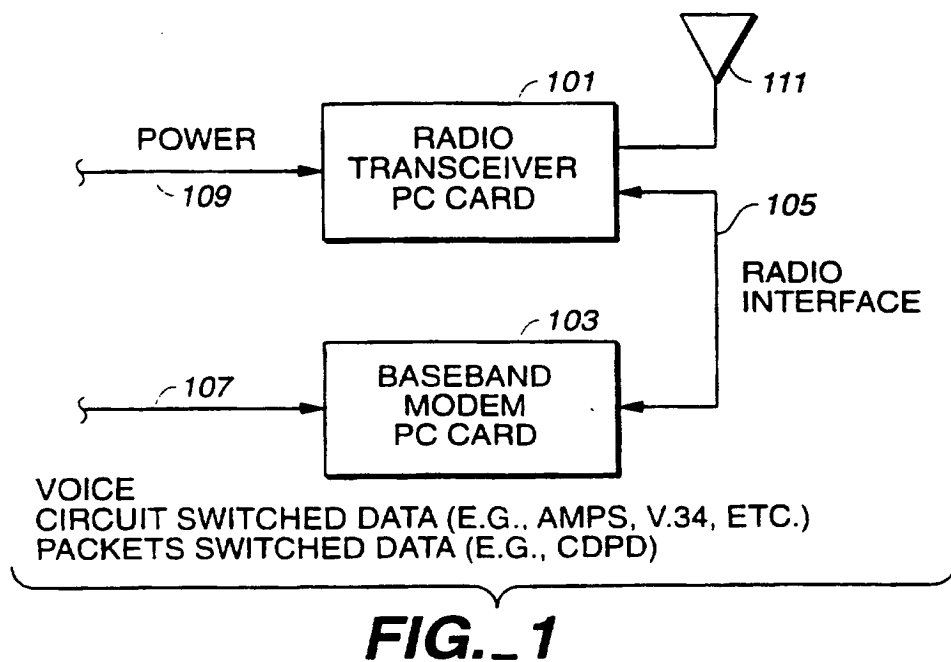
It will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that the
5 invention can be embodied in other specific forms without departing from the spirit or essential character thereof. The present description is therefore considered in all respects to be illustrative and not restrictive. The scope of the invention is indicated by the appended claims, and all changes that come within the meaning and range of equivalents thereof are intended to be embraced
10 therein.

What is claimed is:

1. A wireless modem comprising:
a radio transceiver having a first interface and a second interface,
the second interface allowing the radio transceiver to be received within a
5 PCMCIA slot;
a baseband modem having a first interface; and
means for establishing communication between the radio
transceiver through the first interface thereof and the baseband modem through
the first interface thereof.
10
2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the baseband modem includes
a multiple-protocol engine for receiving communications in accordance with a
plurality of protocols.
- 15 3. The apparatus of Claim 2 wherein the plurality of protocols
includes at least one of a set of protocols including AMPS voice, AMPS data
and CDPD.
4. The apparatus of Claim 3 wherein the plurality of protocols
20 includes more than one protocol within said set of protocols.
5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the radio transceiver receives
only power through the second interface thereof.
- 25 6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the baseband modem is an
internal modem of a notebook computer.
7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the baseband modem is an
external modem further comprising a second interface allowing the baseband
30 modem to be received within a PCMCIA slot.

8. A radio transceiver comprising:
 - a first interface for receiving commands from a separate baseband modem; and
 - 5 a second interface allowing the radio transceiver to be received within a PCMCIA slot.

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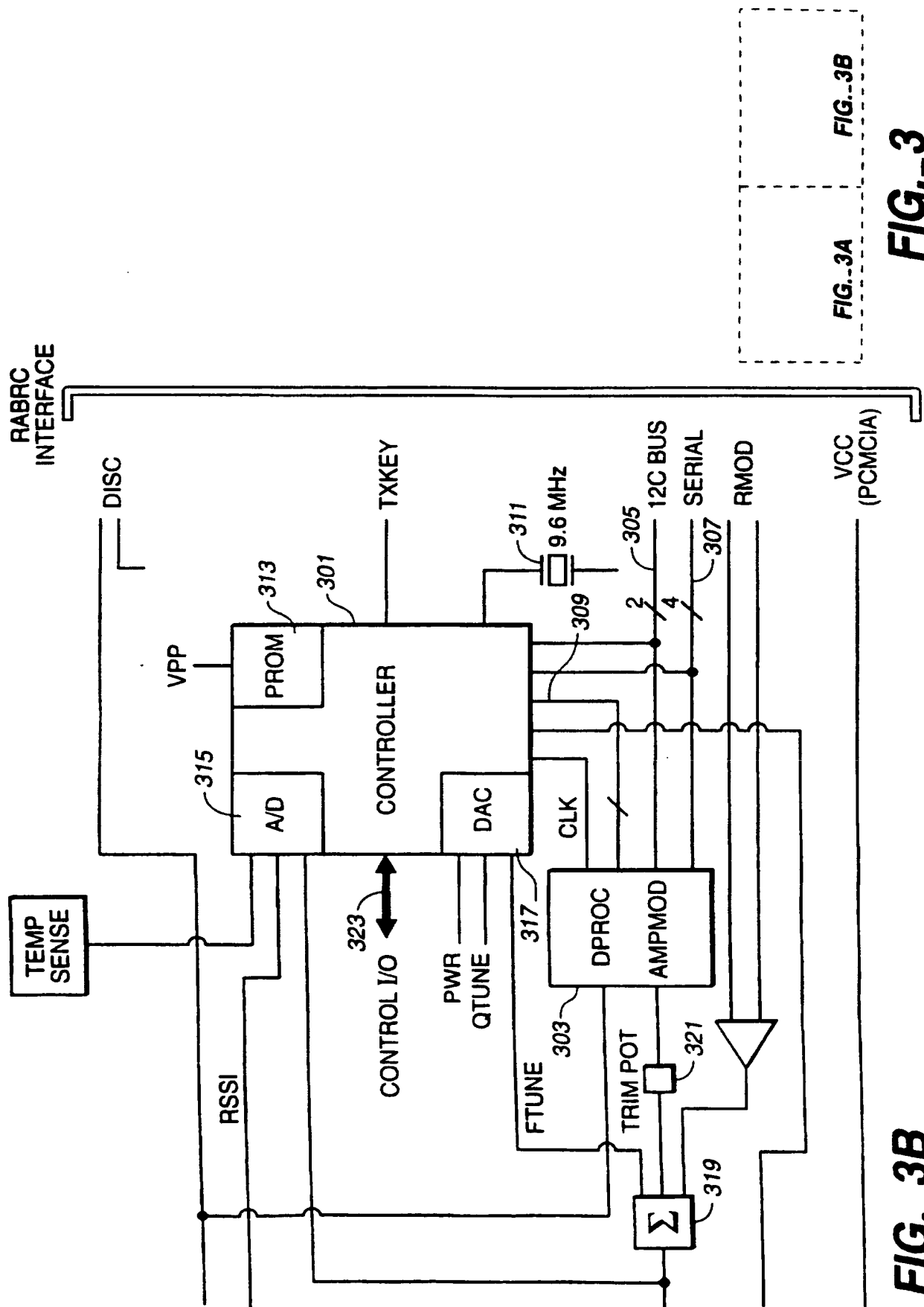
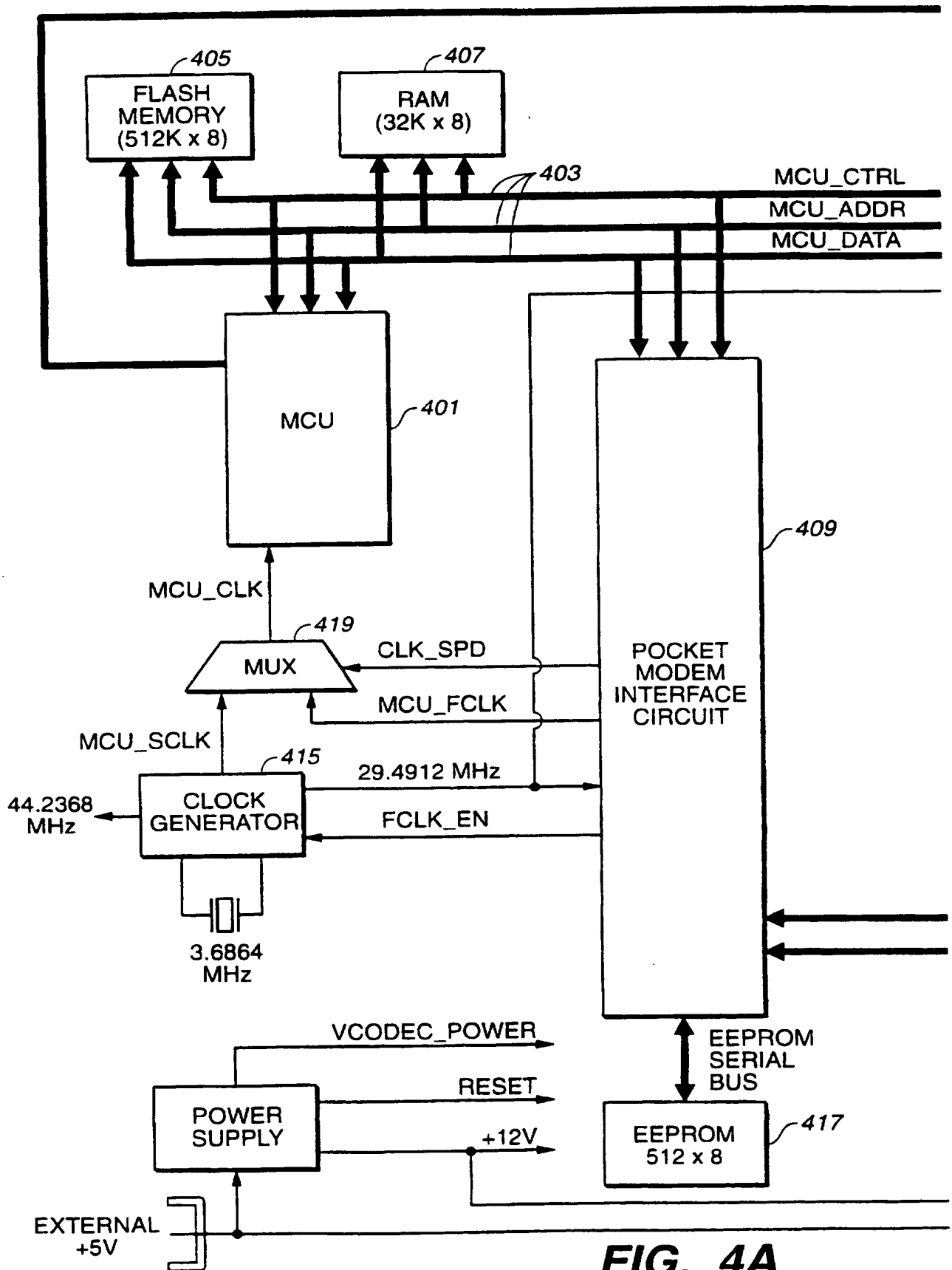


FIG. 3B

FIG. 3A

FIG. 3B

4 / 8

**FIG. 4A**

SUBSTITUTE SHEET (RULE 26)

5 / 8

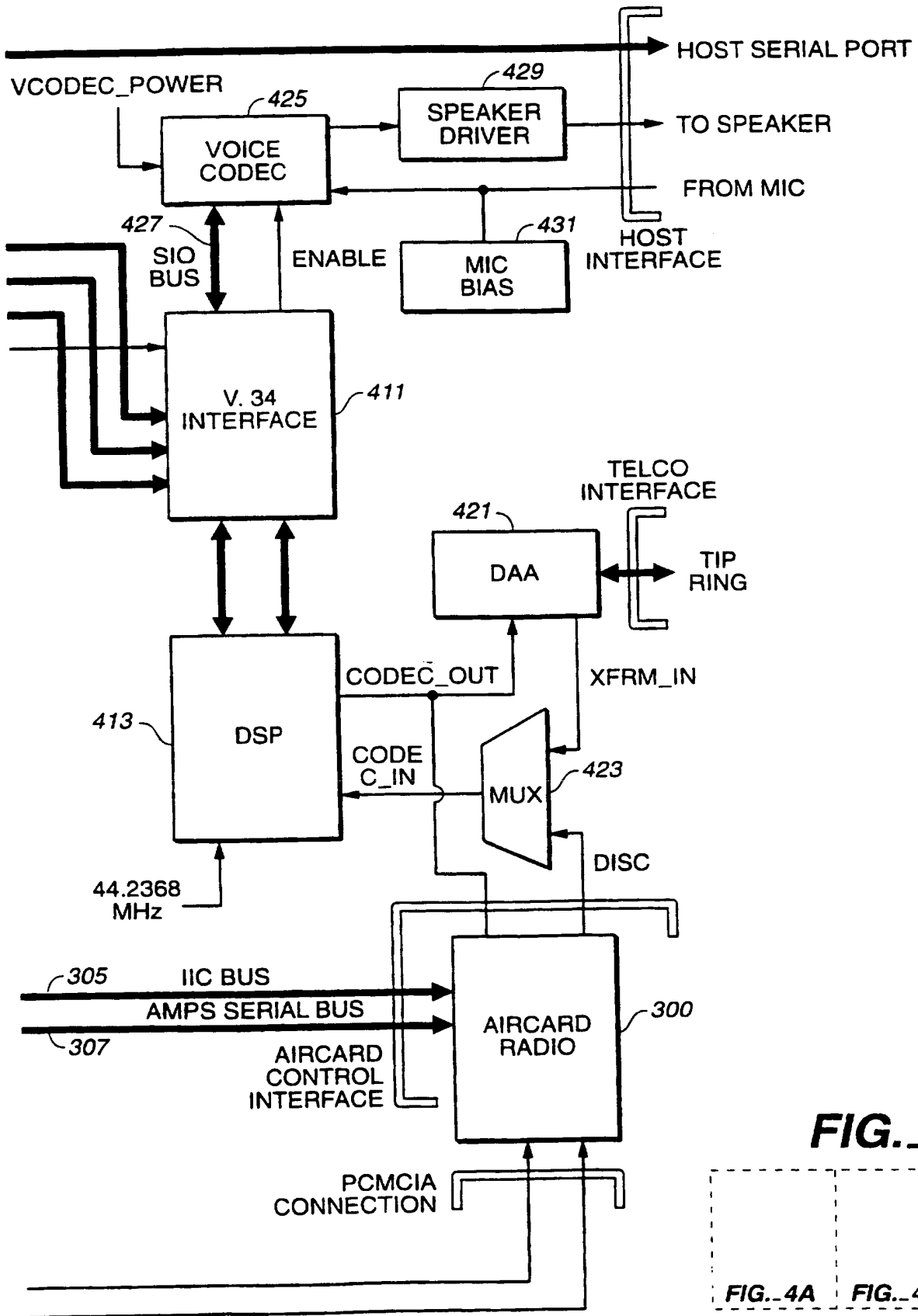


FIG. 4B

FIG. 4

FIG. 4A FIG. 4B

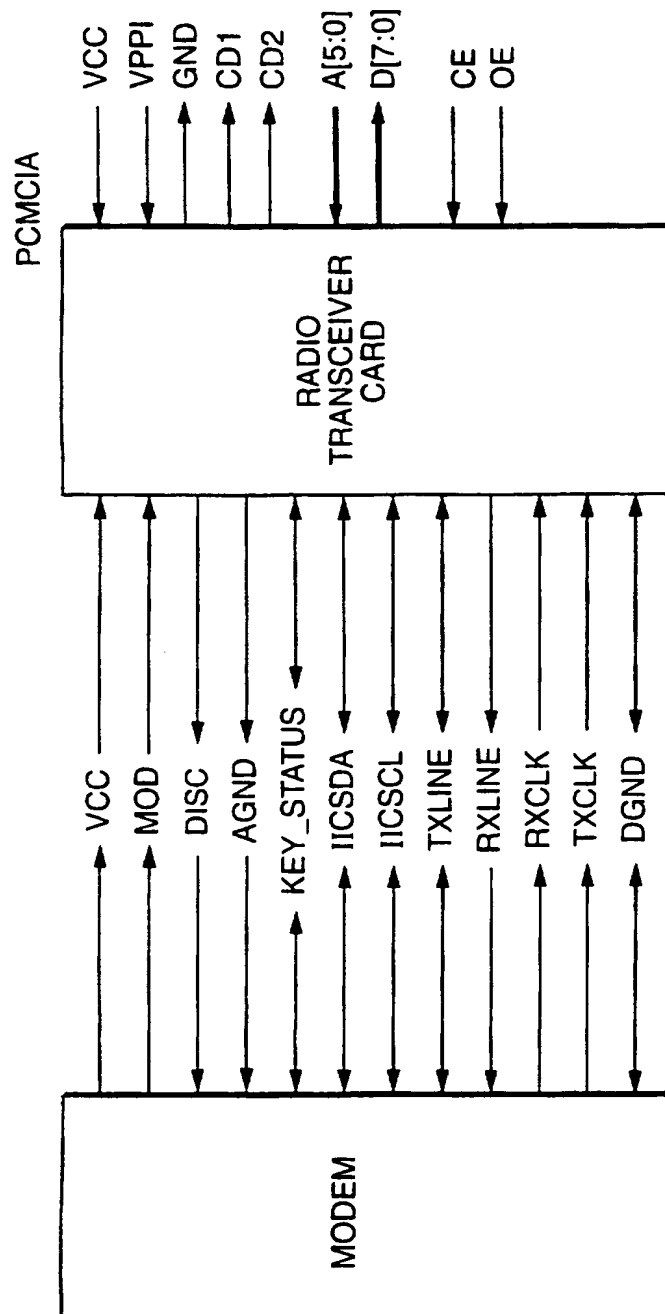


FIG. 5

FIG._6

GENERAL CONTROL - RESETS TO 0x00

WDG RST	RST	WDOG	SLEEP	KEY MODE	ARM/ KEY	RXON	TXON
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FIG._7

ADC-DAC SELECT - RESETS TO 0x00

	DAC 2	DAC 1	DAC 0	ADC 2	ADC 1	ADC 0
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FIG._8

ADC-DAC DATA - RESETS TO UNDEFINED

D7	D6	D5	D4	D3	D2	D1	D0
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FIG._9

IOPORT DIRECTION - RESETS TO 0xFF

D7	D6	D5	D4	D3	D2	D1	D0
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FIG._10

IOPORT DATA - RESETS TO 0x00

D7 (SPARE)	EEC S	LE	DPR OCR ST	BUS Y	TXC TRL	TAC TRL	RAC TRL
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STATUS MASK - RESETS TO 0x00

-BS YMS K	-TX CMS K	-RA CMS K	-TA CMS K	BSY MSK	TXC MSK	RAC MSK	TAC MSK
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FIG._ 11

RADIO STATUS

						TXK EY	LOC K
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FIG._ 12

DATA WRITE OPERATION

S	Address	W	A	Length (bits)	A	Data I	A	...	Data N	A	P
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S = START CONDITION
P = STOP CONDITION
W = WRITE
R = READ
A = ACKNOWLEDGE

FIG._ 13

DATA READ OPERATION

S	Address	W	A	Length (bits)	A	S	Address	R	A	Data I	...	Data N	A	P
---	---------	---	---	---------------	---	---	---------	---	---	--------	-----	--------	---	---

FIG._ 14

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/CA 97/00727

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 6 H04M11/06

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC 6 H04M

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No
Y	WO 94 29968 A (MITSUI COMTEK CORP) 22 December 1994 see abstract see page 6, line 19 - line 29 ---	1-4,6,8
Y	WO 90 03076 A (INTELLIGENCE TECHNOLOGY CORP) 22 March 1990 see page 2, line 24 - page 3, line 8 see page 14, line 31 - page 15, line 7 see page 16, line 19 - line 32 ---	1-4,6,8
A	GB 2 285 558 A (NIPPON ELECTRIC CO) 12 July 1995 -----	1-8

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

21 January 1998

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/CA 97/00727

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